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The Transportation Planning Agency for Miami-Dade County



TRANSPORTATION FOR A NEW CENTURY

A Report to the People of Miami-Dade County

No. 6, Summer 2003

INSIDE:

**MPO Vision
and Partners 2**

**People's Transportation
Plan 3**

**Regional
Transportation 4**

Air and Seaports 6

Major Projects 7

**Citizen
Involvement 8**

Send Your Ideas 8

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MPO Plans Miami-Dade Transportation

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) presents to the people of Miami-Dade County its annual report on the metropolitan area transportation program. The MPO's mission is to plan for the provision of integrated and efficient transportation facilities and services in Miami-Dade County, while ensuring the highest possible level of community participation in transportation planning.

This year, the report highlights the various transportation services offered to urban travelers in Miami-

Dade County and the Southeast Florida region by the various transportation agencies. Demand on the transportation system continues to increase and requires multi-faceted solutions to keep people and goods moving as efficiently as possible. Automobiles, buses, trains, trucks, pedestrians, bicycles and other motorized and non-motorized forms of travel are all important, and all are continually taken into account in the MPO's transportation planning efforts.

Planning for the future of the area's transportation system extends beyond Miami-Dade County through coordination with neighboring MPO's in Broward and Palm Beach counties. Services such as the Regional Rideshare and Vanpool programs, Dial 511 for Traveler Information, the Road Rangers Assistance Program, and SunPass®, are offered to the entire South Florida population of approximately five million persons, as well as to visitors to the area. In Miami-Dade County, the public transportation system will play an expanded role in the needed approach to increase mobility as a result of voter approval in November 2002 for a dedicated funding source for transportation and the many projects listed in the County's People's Transportation Plan.

The MPO will continue to consider both tradition-



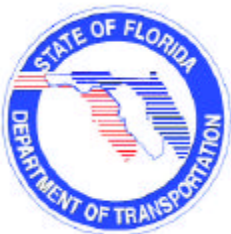
The MPO website's new look:

al and non-traditional approaches in carrying out its mission. As always, information flow with the public is a key component of planning a successful transportation system. Visit our newly improved Miami-Dade MPO web site for the latest transportation information! Documents and studies are available online, as well as detailed information on services through linkages with our transportation partners in the region. ✦

Recently Completed MPO Studies

- ✓ Downtown Transportation Master Plan
- ✓ Downtown Miami-Miami Beach Transportation Corridor (Bay Link)
- ✓ School Zone Traffic Congestion
- ✓ Transit Contra Flow Feasibility
- ✓ Municipal Transit Circulator Policy
- ✓ Truck Parking In Unincorporated Miami-Dade Residential Areas
- ✓ Waterways for Commuters Feasibility

Our Transportation Partners



John Martinez,
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Secretary

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(305) 470-5100 ▼ www11.myflorida.com



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Officials inaugurate new services resulting from the approval of the Sales Tax Referendum.

New Traffic Signals Coming!

The Miami-Dade County Public Works Department has begun the first stage of integrated testing of its new Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS). The state-of-the-art system utilizes sophisticated, intelligent intersection control equipment and the latest technology in the County's Traffic Control Center. Currently, 16 signalized intersections in two areas of Miami-Dade County are under the control of the new ATMS. The first group of eight intersections is in the vicinity of the Dolphin Mall. The second group of intersections is on the heavily traveled SW 8th Street corridor from SW 82nd Avenue to SW 109th Avenue.

The new ATMS system will be expandable beyond the current system's limit of 2000 signals. It will also allow for the implementation of signal timing patterns that are more efficient. It will be able to continue to operate even if communication lines to the central computer are temporarily inoperative. Once fully implemented, benefits will include: increases to roadway vehicle-moving capacity; reductions in traffic delay, congestion and vehicle emissions; and improvements in air quality in the Miami-Dade metropolitan area. ✦

The People's Transportation Plan in Action

Miami-Dade County, one of the most congested urban areas in the United States, turned to the community for suggestions on alternatives to ease the increasing traffic gridlock that plagues our highways and threatens our quality of life.

After more than 80 public meetings, two transportation summits, the launching of www.trafficrelief.com, numerous radio call-in shows, and several municipal and community council meetings, a viable plan emerged. On November 5, 2002, Miami-Dade County voters overwhelmingly approved the People's Transportation Plan (PTP) and the creation of a Citizens' Independent Transportation Trust (CITT) to oversee its implementation.

**For more information
about the PTP,
Call (305) 375-1095.**

Miami-Dade Transit launched the first service improvements the morning after the election. Downtown's Metromover became a free service for all riders. Everyone 65 years and older, as well as other Social Security recipients, could ride buses and trains free with a Golden Passport, without the minimum income requirements. By the end of the week, two new routes, the Little Haiti Connection and the free Coconut Grove Circulator, were in operation.

Since then, the Coral Way MAX, Sweetwater, Hialeah Gardens and Little Havana Circulators have begun operating. The new SW 168 Street Busway Park & Ride lot and FIU South Bus Terminal were also dedicated. More than 30 routes now offer more frequent service throughout the county. By 2006, the size of the existing bus fleet will double, offering even more bus service, more often.

The PTP calls for Metrorail to begin 24-hour service in June 2003. In addition, another 88.9 miles are planned to be added to the rapid transit system by 2025. Implementation of the PTP is expected to create an estimated 3,000 new jobs at Miami-Dade Transit alone, with thousands more in the construction and service sectors, paving the way for what truly will be a "Golden Age" of public transportation in Miami-



New 30-foot Buses are sleek and comfortable.



The New Palmetto Metrorail Station at NW 74th Street will encourage drivers to ride Metrorail.



Special Transportation Services (STS)

STS is a shared-ride service that provides door-to-door transportation for people with disabilities who are unable to use Metrobus, Metrorail, or Metromover. The MPO is an active participant on the local Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board.

Jitneys Help Along the Way!

Today there are over 13 jitney certificate holders that operate 108 jitney vehicles on 8 routes to complement or help complete Metrobus routes. Providers of jitney services are allowed to operate in corridors specified by the County Code. ✦



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Road Rangers

Since 1997, the Road Rangers have been patrolling the roadways of Miami-Dade County looking for motorists in distress. They come armed with battery chargers, jumper cables, gasoline, jacks, tools to fix flat tires, a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit and many other emergency essentials. FDOT and MDX provide the service free of charge to motorists in need. Thirty vehicles in the fleet also help remove roadway debris and assist in a variety of other ways. In 2002, the Road Rangers assisted approximately 72,000 stranded individuals. Dial *FHP for Road Ranger Assistance.

Municipalities Providing Transit

The City of Hialeah introduced the Hialeah Transit System (HTS), a new City transit service that has been designed to complement current systems. "Our goal is to service areas of the City that are not reached by current systems, not to compete against them" said Mayor Raul L. Martinez. The Hialeah Transit system has been running less than a year and already boasts a daily ridership of over 1,500 passengers daily. The system is comprised of four routes served by ten buses. Despite being a new service to the City, HTS has become a huge success.



Other municipalities operating transit circulator services include:

- ▶ Aventura
- ▶ North Bay Village
- ▶ Surfside
- ▶ Bal Harbour
- ▶ Sunny Isles Beach
- ▶ Miami Beach ✦

Miami Beach ELECTROWAVE shuttle ridership has reached record levels this year as a result of service



Regional Commuting Solutions

With the increasing cost of fuel, maintenance and insurance, more commuters are seeking options to make their commutes more efficient, less expensive and less stressful. South Florida Commuter Services (SFCS), the regional commuter assistance program, offers a range of programs geared to encourage use of ridesharing to ease traffic congestion on South Florida's roadways.

This program, administered by FDOT, provides a number of free services, such as ride matching to commuters. Commuters interested in carpooling or vanpooling can sign up for inclusion into the SFCS database via mail, phone or via the website, and will receive a letter with results from the state-of-the-art database, including a list of potential carpool matches.

One of the more effective incentives to encourage ridesharing is the kind that puts money back in the commuter's pocket. Under new

Federal law, employers may provide (in the form of a subsidy or pre-tax incentive) up to \$100/employee per month for transit or vanpool costs. Both the employer and the employee save money and the community benefits.

For more information on how you or your company can save money, contact South Florida Commuter Services at **1-800-234-RIDE** or visit **www.1800234RIDE.com**. ✦



South Florida Vanpools Program (SFVP)

Share the ride and use the HOV lane to save time and money! Working in conjunction with South Florida Commuter Services, SFVP organizes commuter groups for companies and individuals through a full-service van leasing program. Commuter Services provides you the free match list and Emergency Ride Home program, and you get to relax and enjoy the ride. There are nearly 63 commuter vans in the program today, and growing!

New SunPass® Express Lanes on SR-

In January 2003, the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX®) opened South Florida's first SunPass® Express Lanes on SR-836 Expressway. SunPass motorists now have the convenience of passing through the SR-836 mainline toll plaza at posted highway speeds. "This is a great time for non-SunPass users to consider acquiring a SunPass transponder," said Servando M. Parapar, P.E., Executive Director of MDX. "Utilizing this technology at the SR-836 toll plaza will result in easier commutes for motorists with SunPass transponders." On SR-836, SunPass customers are advised to move to the left lane as they pass the NW 27th Avenue exit. They will then pass under electronic readers, which record the SunPass information to automatically debit the customer's account, all without interruption, at highway speeds. Soon, all MDX facilities will have dual dedicated SunPass Lanes located at the far left side of the main line toll plazas. "MDX is committed to electronic toll collection with the use of SunPass to improve mobility and increase capacity at our plazas," Parapar said. ✦



To purchase a SunPass®:

- ▶ Call: (888) 865-5352

260,000 Transponders sold in Miami-Dade

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Tri-Rail on Double-Track!

Tri-Rail is on track in 2003 to record solid ridership growth, significant double tracking construction progress, and an enhanced leadership role in the effort to develop an effective, reliable regional transportation network for South Florida.

Tri-Rail ridership has increased at a far greater rate than the national average for commuter trains. Nationwide, the use of mass transit is down 1.9%, but Tri-Rail logged a 10.5% increase for the final quarter of 2002. Since October 7, 2002, Tri-Rail has carried more than 10,000 passengers a day on 13 separate occa-

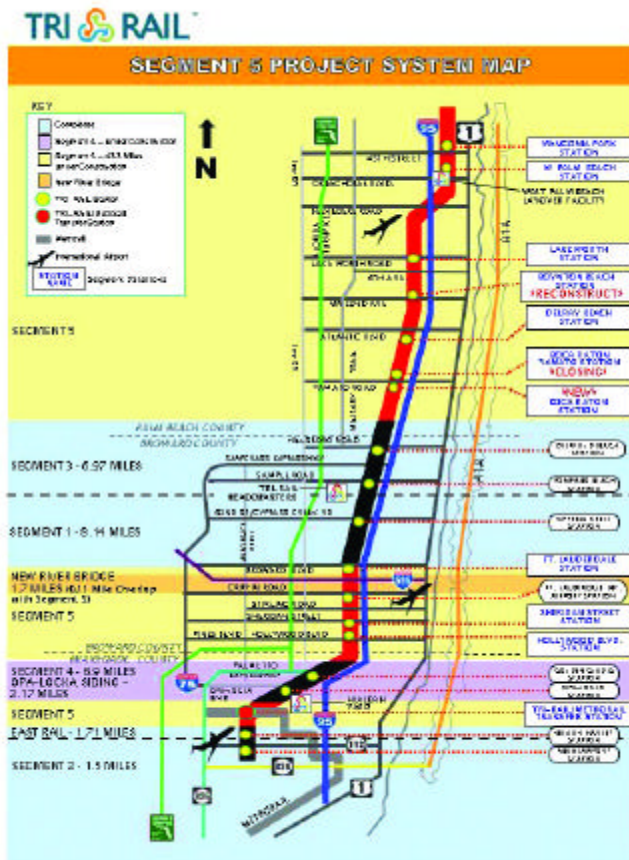
sions. On January 14, 2003 Tri-Rail carried 11,556 riders, the eighth highest passenger load since the commuter rail began service.

On January 14, 2002, the Tri-County Commuter Rail Authority issued a notice to proceed for the largest construction project in the history of the Agency. Segment 5 of the Double Track Corridor Improvement Program is in the "final phase" of double track construction, supported by a Full Funding Grant Agreement with the Federal Government and state funds through the Florida Department of Transportation. Work will include the installation of approximately 45 miles of double track, upgrades to existing track, renovation of nine existing stations and construction of a new station in Boca Raton, enhancements to grade crossings, upgrades to signal safety systems, and acquisition of new cab cars and locomotives.

Once construction is completed in 2005, Tri-Rail will increase its service from the 28 trains it currently



operates daily to 48 trains, which will run every 20 minutes during rush hour. The completion of the double tracking will mean enhanced, on-time performance for passengers and greater scheduling flexibility for daily commuters. Riders will enjoy more options during the midday, on the weekend and late at night. ✦



Regional Update!

In an unprecedented development, all four transit operators (Miami-Dade Transit, Broward County Transit, Palm Tran, and Tri-Rail) are working together to enhance transit services across the entire South Florida Region. The two efforts described below are just part of the planned regional program.

Regional "Transit Consumer Information Network" in the Works!

The Transit Consumer Information Network (CIN) will provide a common database for transit operations in South Florida. It may be accessed through the South Florida's SunGuide Advanced Traveler Information System (ATIS) and the 511 travel information system. Transit agencies, members of South Florida's Regional Transportation Organization (RTO), have approved a Joint Participation Agreement pledging to create a regional transit database for use in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties. FDOT will supplement the SunGuide contract to create and maintain the regional transit database.

Electronic Fare Payment: The Smart Card

The four transit agencies in the South Florida Region are working to jointly procure fare collection equipment with provisions for "smart cards" that can be used to pay the fare on any bus or train. Broward County Transit, Palm Tran, Miami-Dade Transit, and

Tri-Rail have finalized the technical specifications and are in the process of negotiating the scope of work. The goal of the project is to provide a Universal Automated Fare Collection System that will support a region-wide magnetic smart card system for seamless fare payment among the four transit agencies. Benefits include increased customer convenience and simplified fare collection. The card could be used at all Tri-Rail stations and on Miami-Dade Transit Metrobus, Metrorail and Metromover systems, as well as on transit systems in Broward and Palm Beach Counties. ✦



A transit information clerk is ready and waiting to assist you with your transit needs.

511 Makes its Debut

Trying to get the latest on traffic jams? Call the new 511 free phone service anywhere in southeast Florida to find out how to avoid congestion, construction, and confusion! The menu on this automated service will help you get the low-down on any of your chosen routes to get realtime information about anywhere you want to go. Since its inception in July 2002, approximately 84,000 calls have been logged in southeast Florida each month and the numbers are increas-



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Port of Miami Cargo and Cruise Activity

For three consecutive years, the Dante B. Fascell Port of Miami-Dade has posted record numbers, despite the country's trying economic times. During Fiscal Year 2001-02, the transportation hub, which still ranks as the "Cruise Capital of the World," saw a 7.4% increase in cruise passenger traffic, with 3,642,990 vacationers taking to the high seas. Cargo figures rose 5.3%, boosting the Port's throughput to 8,681,735 tons. As projected, the Port also saw its twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) numbers climb to 980,743, edging towards the one million mark.

The geographical location of the Port of Miami played a pivotal role in its economic survival this past year. While the Port has traditionally looked to Latin America and the Caribbean as its stronghold, Port administrators saw an increase in cargo movement to and from Europe and the Far East. And on the cruise side of the business, newly homeported cruise ships enabled the Port of Miami to post gains across the board.

Looking ahead, the Port of Miami is poised to stay a leader in the maritime industry as it upgrades and enhances its infrastructure. Visitors to the Port in the near future will see new parking garages, heightened levels of security at the entrance gate and improved roadways that separate cruise passenger traffic from cargo trucks. ✦



MIA Capital Improvement Program Enters Peak Construction Phase

Since the redevelopment of Miami International Airport (MIA) began more than 10 years ago, more than 123 projects worth more than \$1 billion have been completed. MIA now has one million square feet of expanded and/or refurbished terminal space. With a total of \$2.4 billion under construction, and another \$1.3 billion in the design, bid and award phases, MIA is moving into the most active construction period in the history of its Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Major projects currently under construction include: the 8,600-foot New North Runway, which will increase airfield capacity by 25%; the Central Chiller Plant Expansion that will be doubled after the new construction; the Midfield Air Rescue and Fire Fighting Facility; the Central Collection Plaza, which will modernize and ease the flow in the parking garages; 15 Security Rooms with associated cable and equipment projects; and numerous utilities and drainage projects.

"The approved Phase I of the CIP focuses on the projects that are core to our future," said Miami-Dade Aviation Department Director Angela Gittens. "These include a fourth runway, a redeveloped North Terminal, a new South Terminal, and investment in the infrastructure to support those facilities (expanded water and electrical capacity, air handling, sewer and

telecommunications). In addition, the revised program invests more than \$123 million in security infrastructure, more than \$300 million in environmental mitigation and improvement, \$50 million in noise and safety projects, and more than \$200 million to maintain existing infrastructure."

With 75% of MIA's revenues directly related to airline and passenger activity, the Director is focusing on diversifying sources of income. Efforts to increase concession revenues include modifying the size of the stores. "Although stores will be smaller, we will have more stores, which will increase revenue and increase small business, minority and women-owned business participation," Gittens said. "Our goal is to maximize revenue through the highest and best use of space, while creating a more passenger friendly airport environ-



ment." ✦

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Recently Completed Projects

FDOT Improves the Palmetto Expressway

It will cost a total of \$915 million to reconstruct the Palmetto Expressway (SR-826). The project includes adding lanes and improving access to and from every ramp from NW 154th Street south to US 1. FDOT began this massive project in 1994, and to this point, three of 15 segments have been completed. Section 12 (NW 122 St. to 154 St.) was completed in 1997. Section 1 (US 1 to SW 72 St.) was completed in 1998. Section 8 (NW 47 St. to NW 62 St.) was completed in 2001. The remaining 12 segments are expected to be completed by 2008.

New SunPass® Lanes Improve SR-874 Toll Plaza

A new toll plaza administration office, additional SunPass® lane barrier wall and road widening efforts have upgraded facilities on SR-874. To increase the vehicle capacity at the toll plaza, an "Exact Change Lane" has been replaced by an Express "SunPass" Lane in both the northbound and southbound directions with new signage reflecting changes at the toll facility. A road-widening project has also increased northbound and southbound traffic flow between SW 112th Street overpass to the toll plaza. These efforts are minimizing traffic delays at the plaza. ✦



Cyclists find using buses and trains in their commutes a winning combination.

Major Projects Currently Underway

Lane Widenings and New Toll Plazas for the Turnpike

The segment of the Homestead Extension of Florida's Turnpike (HEFT) between SR-836 and Okeechobee Road will be widened. It is one of Miami-Dade's busiest segments of Florida's Turnpike. Construction to add lanes to this section of the HEFT is underway and is anticipated to be complete early 2004. The project is a continuation of the widening of the HEFT, north to I-75, and also includes the addition of two new toll plazas at the Okeechobee Road interchange.

South Miami-Dade Busway

Urban Corridor funds provided by the State will be used for the continuation of the successful South Miami-Dade Busway and Flagler Max routes. The South Miami-Dade Busway extension is under construction by Office of Public Transportation Management (OPTM) using federal discretionary and state funds. The Busway extension will stretch over 11 miles south of the existing 8.2-mile Busway, terminating in Florida City. The project is scheduled for completion in 2005.



Southwest aerial view of the MIC Rental Car Facility, showing the MIC-MIA connector in the foreground.

Miami Intermodal Center (MIC)

A significant component of the regional transportation network, the MIC is designed as a means to link various rail systems, public and private bus services, and rental car facilities with MIA, thereby providing needed regional connectivity and improving access to MIA. The construction phase has begun, as the land has been cleared and prepared for the new multimodal facility, which will serve as a principal transportation hub in the South Florida region. Updates can be found at www.micdot.com.

Bus Replacement Program

In 2002, MDT received 110 40-foot, low-floor buses as part of MDT's bus replacement plan. Using funds from financing and People's Transportation Plan (PTP) funds, MDT will receive 100 40-foot, low-floor buses and 70 30-foot buses for new bus service in 2003. ✦



This map can be viewed at www.trafficrelief.com.

Future Projects

Rail Corridors

The half-penny sales tax will provide the funding necessary to begin a comprehensive rail system linking the current 21-mile Metrorail to many other neighborhoods and attractions in Miami-Dade County.

Greenways Improvements

Several Greenways projects are underway, and many more are under development based on the Bicycle Facilities Plan. The Miami River component will improve public access, parks, paths and bikeways to enhance use of the river. In addition, the South Dade Greenways Plan includes the Ludlam Trail Greenway, a 7-mile corridor that uses current FEC railway land from NW 12 Street to Dadeland Mall, including a link to the South Dade Trail. ✦

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GET INVOLVED!

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Email:

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